

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT**Routing Slip**

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Remarks:

Executive Secretary

9/28/83

Date

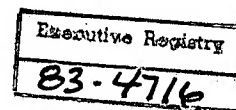
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STAT

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

September 20, 1983



Dear Colleague:

Having recently returned from an eight day fact-finding tour to all the Central American countries except Belize, I am more firmly convinced than ever that the course set by the Reagan Administration is the only effective one.

I met with heads of state, foreign and defense ministers, opposition political parties, members of the media, the clergy, private citizens and independent human rights organizations. I discovered I was the first U.S. Senator to visit Sandinista Nicaragua during the 18-month tour of Ambassador Quainton. (See Appendix B for list of persons with whom I met.)

I found that there exists among Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica and Guatemala, a new cohesion and unity in response to the threat these countries perceive from Sandinista terrorism and subversion, and almost uniformly strong support for Administration policies.

There was, however, very grave concern with regard to whether the Congress will allow the Administration to sustain a credible American presence in Central America. If the leaders of these nations are confident of continuing adequate levels of military, economic and diplomatic support, the Friendly Four will insist upon driving the Contadora process, as indeed, they should. It is their future which is at stake. They have the right to insist that it is they who must determine their own destiny. They are highly apprehensive that the Contadora process will seek to accommodate the Nicaraguans and Cubans by achieving a negotiated "peace" that will simply buy time for a currently beleaguered Sandinista regime and ultimately threaten the same result which a U. S.-negotiated "peace" brought to South Vietnam and Cambodia.

Based upon my observation and conversations with both the governments and their opposition and the private sector in each of the Friendly Four, I offer the following specific suggestions that would help further U. S. interests in Central America and lead to a real and enduring peace:



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1. The U. S. should increase the number of American advisors in El Salvador based on legitimate requirements up to some practical limit, say 200. The current requirement that no more than 55 advisors be present is absurd; it has produced great hardship and needless contortions in rotating needed personnel out of the country to allow others in so as to not exceed the arbitrary and artificial limit of 55. To put this figure in context, the D.C. Police Academy retains a full-time faculty of 48 to handle student loads that peak at 500 cadets. By comparison, the Salvadoran army currently numbers almost 30,000 for a nation of 5 million contrasted with a city of 600,000. Our advisors are doing a superb job, but are simply spread much too thin.

2. The U. S. should continue to sustain a military presence in the form of the present exercises by the carrier battle groups, joint exercises such as AHUAS TARA II, and the Regional Military Training Center established some months ago in Honduras.

3. The U. S. should encourage and support the Friendly Four in reviving the Central American Defense Community, CONDECA (a mutual defense pact between El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras and Guatemala), at the earliest possible date, to achieve military cooperation and political cohesion. Guatemala is eager to resume its role as host.

4. The U. S. should encourage the Friendly Four to act in concert and to insist for their protection upon negotiations that produce a specific and verifiable guarantee of their security by a specified date soon; or, if the Contadora process fails to produce that required early result, they should be encouraged to take appeal from a failed Contadora process to the Organization of American States. For obvious reasons, the venue for appeal must be the OAS which is responsible for regional affairs and not the UN Security Council.

5. The OAS should be encouraged to reconvene as an item of unfinished business the special session on Human Rights in Nicaragua. You will recall that during the Somoza regime, the OAS took the unprecedented step of interfering with the sovereignty of a member state and offered support and recognition to the Sandinista regime on the basis of written promises that the revolution would bring human rights and democratic institutions. The issue of human rights, specifically that of free elections in Nicaragua,

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should be a central theme of the Friendly Four, first within Contadora and, if necessary, later at the OAS. The Sandinista leadership, which took power in July 1979 with the backing of an overwhelming majority of the population, has yet to hold an election. In sharp contrast, Costa Rica is a fully functioning democracy; Honduras has a democratically elected government; and in El Salvador, another revolutionary government which came to power at the same time, as did the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, held a free and honest election monitored by hundreds of foreign observers and journalists in March 1982. You will recall that more than 80 percent of the voting population exercised its rights, despite a campaign of terrorism to frighten them away from the polls.

6. The United States should resume military aid to Guatemala and increase economic assistance from \$40 million to at least the \$50 million requested by Ambassador Chapin. These people deserve our help.

7. Our present level of support in Central America is inadequate. Were we to increase it by half again as much to \$1.2 billion, it would still represent a modest investment in comparison with what we spend elsewhere where American vital interests are less, and much less immediately threatened. More to the point, failure to provide adequate military, economic and diplomatic support now will simply defer the need to do so to a time when it will become far more costly and far more dangerous.

8. U. S. aid should continue to be accompanied by U. S. pressure for progress on human rights issues. In particular, it is essential that early, open and honest elections proceed in order for the Friendly Four to insist upon the same performance by Nicaragua on the quite accurate rationale that only genuine pluralism within Nicaragua can provide realistic assurance of peace for the entire region..

9. Both the government and the opposition within Costa Rica recognize the threat of Sandinista subversion through the workings of an existing fifth column. Present U. S. military assistance to Costa Rica to enable modernization of Costa Rican internal security forces is inadequate. I recommend that we provide the Costa Ricans needed and desired assistance up to \$7.5 million.

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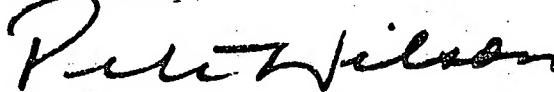
A negotiated "peace" which does not provide real and verifiable security against the threat of Sandinista "revolution without frontiers" would, indeed, produce in time another Vietnam.

To avoid this and to provide encouragement to a new unity among the fledgling democracies of Central America, the United States must demonstrate staying power on all three fronts--economic, military and diplomatic.

The United States Congress must support the Administration's initiatives if Congress is not itself to be guilty of creating a self-fulfilling prophecy by producing another Vietnam when, in fact, that result can be avoided--but only by adequate and sustained demonstrations of U. S. staying power within the region.

I have attached, as Appendix A, a recent New York Times guest column on Central America, written by Mortimer Zuckerman, the distinguished editor of Atlantic Monthly. It recounts the changed views towards the Central American situation that occurred to Mr. Zuckerman, after his recent trip to the region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Pete Wilson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Pete" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Wilson".

PETE WILSON

Attachments (2)

On U.S. Latin Policy

By Mortimer B. Zuckerman

THE NEW YORK TIMES, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1984

Because of enormous public confusion over the United States' involvement in Central America, I recently visited the region with a delegation of Congressmen to see it first-hand. I went holding political views of El Salvador and Nicaragua shared by many liberals and centrists in our nation. I returned impressed with the effectiveness of United States policy and convinced that we need to be involved.

I had thought that in El Salvador we were engaged in wrong-headed and dangerous military action on behalf of a repressive Government, and that Washington had failed to address economic and political grievances built up after decades of injustice. I went with the impression that the guerrillas seemed to have won popular support for their efforts to revolutionize the political system. My instinct was that this was only an internal struggle, not an East-West competition, and that once again we were backing the wrong side for the wrong reason.

But I returned home with the sense that United States military support was critical for physical security in the countryside, which, in turn, is necessary to guarantee ordinary Salvadorans' ability to make free choices. I also concluded that our military support is essential if we are to persuade the Salvadoran Government to democratize the political process and implement a program of agrarian reform and economic development. The guerrillas seem to have no larger a popular base than the Government does: Both sides command support with guns.

In Nicaragua, the Sandinista revolution carried the hope for a better and freer life after the feudal tyranny of the United States-supported Somoza regime. Yet what I found was a Government busily consolidating a left-wing totalitarian state internally, and aggressively involved in attempting to overthrow its neighbors. It is the pressure of the United States-backed threat of a military confrontation that has produced the Sandinistas' first clear willingness to negotiate a genuine agreement not to destabilize their neighbors.

In El Salvador, the masses have not been angered to the point of large-scale popular uprisings like those in Nicaragua or Colombia; popular revolt accompanied the guerrillas' offensive in 1980-81, and last year's election showed that at least two-thirds of the people objected to being "liberated" by the revolutionary left. The guerrillas do not appear to have widespread popular support. In this situation, a military solution to control an insurgency is feasible.

To this end, the United States is training and equipping the Salvadoran Army for infantry and small-unit tactics and keeping the soldiers in the field to engage, harass and exhaust the guerrillas. We will have trained about 50 percent of the officers and noncommissioned officers by the end of 1983 in an effort to substitute effective combat leaders for those appointed for political loyalty. As a result, the Army has improved its morale and field performance and engaged in its most sustained and aggressive campaign. It has captured the momentum and substantial military control in much of the eastern provinces, particularly in San Vicente and Usulután. The rebels have withdrawn to remote areas, have not counter-attacked, have limited themselves to hit-and-run attacks and appear to have increasing logistical and manpower problems.

In San Vicente, the Government has coordinated its military presence with programs in health, education, agriculture, transportation and reconstruction to retain the area's loyalty after the army leaves. This is a phase in an overall National Plan for Reconstruction. The cost of this program has been minimal by United States standards: only \$85 million in military aid and \$230 million in economic aid. Even the guerrilla political leader Ruben Zamora acknowledged to us that if this aid continues, the rebels can no longer hope to win the war.

The aid program also serves as leverage against the right-wing military. Only the United States can influence it to move away from a feudal political heritage of violence and vigilantism.

The left feeds off the rigidity of the

Seek democracy

right and military oppression and develops popular support by promising to redistribute the wealth. It also benefits when rightist oligarchies buckle under economic pressures. The best way to diminish popular support for a violent Communist revolution is to open up the political channels and institute agrarian and economic reform. This can take place only when there is no widespread military insurgency.

Our pressure brought about last year's Salvadoran election and this year's negotiations for drafting a new constitution leading to presidential elections in 1984. Elections may be only "one note in the song of democracy," as a Salvadoran clergyman put it, but they represent legitimization of potential civilian control over military and paramilitary forces. Both have perpetrated atrocities that, if allowed to continue, will turn the masses implacably hostile. Our pressure is thus necessary on two counts: to prevent an extremist left-wing takeover while pushing the Government toward rights and democracy.

However, no amount of change will end the Salvadoran conflict if Nicaragua, which regionalized the conflict in Central America, continues to fuel it. When they took over, the Sandinistas feared and hated the United States because of its patronage of Anastasio Somoza Debayle and military invasions over the past 130 years. The Sandinista hymn is "We fight against the Yanqui, enemy of humanity." President Jimmy Carter attempted to offset this by extending economic aid and friendship, but the Sandinistas remained convinced that the revolution would be safe from our intervention only if governments similar to their own were installed elsewhere in Central America: The Sandinistas set out to implement their slogan "revolution without boundaries."

In 1980, the Sandinistas, with Cuban advisers, brought the five main guer-

rilla factions from El Salvador together in Managua, worked out a unity pact, set up joint command and control structures, organized training and logistical support on Nicaraguan soil and provided initial arms supplies. A Salvadoran rebel leader, Mario Aguinaldo, told us that support for training, logistics and command continues.

In Costa Rica, we were told that the Sandinistas are engaged there in a major propaganda campaign and are encouraging unrest, including infiltration in the northern provinces. The attempt to destabilize Costa Rica, a democracy without an army since 1948, is the clearest indication of Sandinista intentions.

Inside Nicaragua, the Sandinistas began and continued a program of totalitarian consolidation of power. The elements of the broader anti-Somoza coalition were discarded one by one — the Roman Catholic Church, other political parties, the press. The only Jewish community center and synagogue were seized and burned. The Sandinistas built the largest military force in Central America. A Cuban-style pattern, with a widespread Cuban presence, has emerged.

To contain an interventionist Nicaragua, Washington sought — unsuccessfully — negotiations four times to bring about noninterference in neighboring territory and limits on Nicaragua's military buildup and the institutionalization of democratic opposition to create internal brakes on aggression. Rebuffed diplomatically, the United States moved militarily, ordering exercises, including fleet deployment. The Central Intelligence Agency expanded its support of the "contras" — the anti-Government guerrillas that harass the countryside. We continue to train and equip the Honduran Army which Nicaragua considers its most dangerous regional military adversary. A border shootout in May with Nicaragua brought about full mobilization of the Honduran Army, signaling its participation in any military crisis in the region.

The cumulative military pressure organized by the Reagan Administration has resulted in a major shift in Sandinista policy. In our meetings with the Sandinista leadership, we were told that Nicaragua was prepared to negotiate verifiable nonintervention in neighboring territories, especially El Salvador. This change appeared to be due exclusively to the perception that the United States had been provoked to the point that a military confrontation was possible.

The United States has long supported repressive rightist regimes, sometimes by using our troops. We must develop an alternative to such regimes — and those of the left — by opening up Latin American political and economic processes. Our interests are involved because what happens in Nicaragua and El Salvador can affect Mexico or the Panama Canal. Central America is our strategic doorstep. We cannot remain above the fray.

Partial List of Persons With Whom Senator Wilson
Met During Central America Trip

PANAMA

Minister Juan José Amado III
Minister of Foreign Relations

General Paul Gorman, USA
Commander in Chief, U. S. Southern Command

HONDURAS

Minister Edgardo Paz Barnica
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

Minister Carlos Roberto Flores Facusse
Secretary of State for Presidency

General Gustavo Adolfo Alvarez Martinez
Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces

Members of the Directorete of the Nicaraguan Democratic
Force (FDN), a Nicaraguan group opposed to the
Sandinista regime

EL SALVADOR

President Alvaro Alfredo Magana Borja
Provisional President

General Carlos Eugenio Vides Casanova
Minister of Defense and Public Security

Minister Fidel Chavez Mena
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Mr. José Napoleón Duarte Fuentes
Former President
(currently the Christian Democratic Party candidate
for President)

Mr. Amando Calderon
Party Secretary, National Republican Alliance (ARENA)

Mrs. Hernandez
Office of Legal Counsel to the Archbishop
Archdiocesan Commission of Justice and Peace

Officials of Unidad Popular Democratica, an El
Salvadoran trade union

COSTA RICA

President Luis Alberto Monge Alvarez

Vice President Alberto Fait Lizano
First Vice President

Minister Fernando Volio Jimenez
Minister of Foreign Relations

Minister Rodolfo Silva Vargas
Presidential Minister - Counselor for Finance
and International Economic Negotiations

Mr. Rafael Angel Calderon Fournier
(former Minister of Foreign Relations and
Presidential Candidate - current head of
Republican Calderonist Party)

Mr. Alfonso Robelo
(former member of Sandinista 5-member ruling
junta - current leader of the Revolutionary
Democratic Alliance (A.R.D.E.), a Nicaraguan
group opposed to the Sandinista government)

NICARAGUA

Commandante Daniel Ortega Saavedra
Coordinator, Junta of the Government of National
Reconstruction

Father Miguel D'Escoto Brockman
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Sub-Commandante Rafael Soliz
Secretary, Council of State

His Excellency Msgr. Miguel Obando y Bravo
Archbishop of Managua

Mrs. Miriam Arguello
National Coordinator, Conservative Democratic
Party

GUATEMALA

General Oscar Humberto Mejia Victores
Head of State and Minister of Defense

Mr. Fernando Andrade Diaz-Duren
Minister of Foreign Affairs-Designate

President Jorge Serrano Elias
President, Council of State

General Hector Mario Lopez Fuentes
Chief of Staff, Guatemalan Army

Most Reverend Jose Ramiro Pellecer Samayoa
Acting Archbishop of Guatemala City